

IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel Claim 9.

Please replace Claim 1 with the following amended Claim 1; a marked up version is attached hereto.

1. A multi stage process for hydrodesulfurizing and hydrogenating a distillate feedstock having a sulfur content greater than about 3,000 wppm, which process comprises:

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- a) reacting said feedstream in a first hydrodesulfurization stage in the presence of a hydrogen-containing treat gas, said first hydrotreating stage containing one or more reaction zones, each reaction zone operated at hydrodesulfurizing conditions and in the presence of a hydrodesulfurization catalyst, thereby resulting in a liquid product stream having a sulfur content less than about 3,000 wppm;
 - b) passing the liquid product stream to a first separation zone wherein a vapor phase product stream and a liquid phase product stream are produced;
 - c) passing the liquid phase product stream to a second hydrodesulfurization stage;
 - d) reacting said liquid phase product stream in said second hydrodesulfurization stage in the presence of a hydrogen-containing treat gas cascaded from, or partially cascaded from, the next downstream stage herein, wherein the rate of introduction of the hydrogen portion of the treat gas in this second stage is less than or equal to 1.5 times the chemical hydrogen consumption in this second reaction stage, said second hydrodesulfurization stage containing one or more reaction zones operated at hydrodesulfurization conditions wherein each reaction zone contains a bed of

hydrotreating catalyst, thereby resulting in a liquid product stream having less than about 100 wppm sulfur;

e) passing the liquid product stream from said second hydrodesulfurization stage to a second separation zone wherein a vapor phase stream and a liquid phase stream are produced;

f) collecting said vapor phase stream;

g) passing said liquid phase stream from step e) to an aromatics hydrogenation stage; and

Ci h) reacting said liquid phase stream in said aromatics hydrogenation stage in the presence of a hydrogen-containing treat gas, said hydrogenation stage containing one or more reaction zones operated at aromatics hydrogenation conditions wherein each reaction zone contains a bed of aromatics hydrogenation catalyst, thereby resulting in a liquid product stream having substantially reduced levels of sulfur and aromatics, and a hydrogen-containing product stream that is cascaded to an upstream hydrodesulfurization stage.
